

Charter of the Federal Public Key Infrastructure Policy Authority

(Draft 12/30/99)

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 The Federal Public Key Infrastructure Policy Authority (FPKIPA) sets policy governing operation of the Federal Bridge Certification Authority (FBCA), to provide a mechanism for agencies employing public key technology to interoperate efficiently. The FBCA allows an agency's Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to trust digital certificates issued by other agency PKIs. The FPKIPA is created under the Government Information Technology Services Board pursuant to Executive Order 13011.

1.2 The FPKIPA comprises agencies who wish to interoperate their PKIs in an efficient fashion. Membership is voluntary. Determinations by the FPKIPA apply to the issuance of certificates by member agencies but do not prescribe how those agencies are to rely on the certificates for transactions; agencies are free to accept or reject certificates issued by other agencies at their discretion, using FPKIPA determinations to assist in making informed decisions.

1.3 The FPKIPA makes no guarantees against fraud or loss resulting from its activities.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of the FPKIPA

2.1 Approving the FBCA Certificate Policy and Certification Practice Statement.

2.2 Entering into a voluntary agreement with the FBCA Operational Authority (FBCA OA) which establishes that: (a) the FBCA OA will effect or terminate interoperation with Federal agencies only when directed by the FPKIPA; (b) the FPKIPA may review FBCA OA activities for compliance with the FBCA Certificate Policy and Certification Practice Statement; and (c) either party may unilaterally terminate the agreement after appropriate notice to the other party.

2.3 Coordinating legal, policy, technical and business issues related to agency PKI interoperability;

2.4 Performing liaison efforts with external parties, including companies, state and local governments, and foreign governments. The FPKIPA covers only U.S. Federal agencies and the FBCA initially will support interoperation only among Federal agency PKIs; ultimately, interoperation through the FBCA will be extended to parties external to the Federal government, when and how the FPKIPA deems appropriate.

3. Membership and Organization

3.1 Membership in the FPKIPA is divided into two categories: observer and voting.

3.1.1 Observer membership is automatic and is granted to any agency wishing to participate. Each agency may have multiple observer representatives. Except as provided in Section 3.1.3 below, all agencies who are members of the Federal PKI Steering Committee shall be considered observer members of the FPKIPA.

3.1.2 Voting membership (one vote) is granted to an agency when that agency applies for interoperation with the FBCA and is accepted by the FPKIPA for that purpose. Where the applicant is subordinate either to a Cabinet-level department or an independent entity of comparable stature as set forth in Section 8 below, voting membership (one vote) shall be vested in the superior organization. Voting membership terminates if the agency's interoperation with the FBCA is terminated for any reason.

3.1.3 The following agencies shall have permanent voting membership (one vote each): Office of Management and Budget, Department of Justice, General Services Administration, Department of the Treasury, Department of Defense, and Department of Commerce. Each agency listed above shall not vote upon its own application for interoperation with the FBCA.

3.2 The FPKIPA may have subordinate committees or working groups as determined by majority vote of the voting membership, to support its operation.

4. Officers

4.1 The FPKIPA shall have a Chair and a Vice Chair, both selected by majority vote of the voting membership. The Chair shall serve a two year term. The first Vice Chair shall serve a one year term, and subsequent Vice Chairs shall serve two year terms, thus providing overlap with the term of the Chair.

4.2 The FPKIPA shall have a Secretary appointed by the Chair who shall record minutes of all FPKIPA meetings and be responsible for administrative matters.

5. Operation

5.1 Meetings shall be held on a schedule to be determined by majority vote of the voting and observer membership, with each agency having one vote per Section 8.1 below. The Chair or, in his or her absence, the Vice Chair, shall preside. All members will be given reasonable notification before any vote is called, all votes shall be recorded, and the results of voting will be published.

5.2 For actions requiring votes, the voting may be done at an FPKIPA meeting, through remote means, or by proxy granted by the member agency to another member agency. Each voting and, where applicable, observer member agency shall be required to cast a vote, except when recusal is necessary owing to a conflict of interest. Failure of a voting or observer member to vote during the voting period will be considered as a proxy given to the Chair.

6. Application for Interoperation with the FBCA

6.1 The FPKIPA shall develop a procedure to be used by agencies wishing to apply for interoperation with the FBCA. The procedure shall be approved by majority vote of all voting members and shall cover: (a) how the applicant agency proposes to map its CA Certificate Policy to the FBCA Certificate Policy respecting certificate levels of assurance; and (b) what duties the applicant agency will have if it is accepted for interoperability with the FBCA, expressed in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the FPKIPA and the applicant agency.

6.2. Upon receipt of an application, the FPKIPA shall review the application and make a determination whether to accept it as received, accept it with changes (such as a different policy mapping than the applicant proposes), or reject it. This determination shall require at least 75% majority vote of the voting membership (excluding any agency which must recuse itself as set forth in Section 3.1.3 or 6.3). Review of the application preparatory to such a vote may be assigned to a committee or working group of the FPKISC. All members (voting and observer) shall be afforded an opportunity to review the application and make their views known to the voting membership prior to the vote being taken. Members who oppose accepting the application shall be given a full opportunity to have their concerns heard and discussed.

6.2.1 If the application is accepted without changes, the applicant agency and the Chair of the FPKIPA shall sign the MOA, and then the Chair shall instruct the FBCA OA, in writing, to take action to effect interoperability between the applicant agency and the FBCA.

6.2.2 If the application is accepted but with changes required by the FPKIPA, the applicant agency will be apprised, and if they agree with the changes, the process in 6.2.1 shall be followed.

6.2.3 If the application is rejected, the FPKIPA shall apprise the applicant agency of the reasons for the rejection. The applicant agency may then revise its application and reapply without prejudice.

6.3 If, subsequent to approval for interoperability, an agency is found to be or admits that it is in material noncompliance with the MOA, the FPKIPA by at least 75% majority vote of the voting membership (excluding the agency in question) shall determine what action to take, which may include termination of interoperability but not expulsion from the FPKIPA or any action contrary to this charter. The agency in question shall have a full opportunity to participate in these deliberations, but shall not cast any votes. The FPKIPA shall develop procedures approved by majority vote of the voting membership describing how it will perform this function. At their discretion, member agencies may cease or restrict interoperability with the affected agency prior to this determination.

7. Revisions to Charter

7.1 Revisions to this charter may be made upon at least 75% majority vote of the voting and observer membership, with each agency having one vote per Section 8.1 below.

8. Nomenclature

8.1 “Agency” shall mean any executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. § 105. It shall include independent executive departments, but not subordinate elements within an agency.

8.2 “Representative” shall mean the person chosen by the agency to attend the meetings of the FPKIPA as a voting or observer participant.

8.3 “Voting member” shall mean any agency that has been determined to be eligible to vote on matters as set forth in Section 3.1.

8.4 “Observer member” shall mean any agency that has not been determined to be eligible to vote on matters as set forth in Section 3.1, but may vote on other matters set forth elsewhere in the Charter.